The Importance of Trails

Variety of Benefits

❖ Economic
❖ Public Health
❖ Transportation
❖ Environmental
❖ Building Community
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

1. New Development

Brigham Square Site – TODAY
(116 housing units & retail)

Prior to 2012
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

New Development

South Norwalk Redevelopment
New Development

High Line, NYC (2008-16)

- 33 building projects
- 1,400 housing units
- 500,000 SF commercial
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Places to Eat & Drink

Swamp Rabbit Trail, Greenville SC
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Places to Eat & Drink

Minuteman Path, Arlington MA

Unknown trail in MD
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Trail-related Tourism Revenue

Grows bicycle tourism
Annual economic impact from bicycle tourism in:
- Wisconsin: $533 million
- Oregon: $400 million
- Iowa: $365 million
- Arizona: $88 million
- Vermont: $83 million
Other Benefits

- Increased property values
- Reduced health care costs/ increased worker productivity
- Helps to recruit and maintain talented staff for businesses
- City/regional branding
3 – fewer years of life expectancy of people living suburban and rural areas

20% – percent of adults who get CDC recommended levels of daily exercise

20 – minutes of exercise minimum of 3X/week to reduce likelihood of heart and respiratory disease

365,000 – premature deaths per year due to physical inactivity and poor nutrition
PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFITS

Trails as preventative medicine!
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

❖ Provides facilities for novice bicyclists and families
❖ Enhances safe routes to schools
❖ Can satisfy pedestrian desire lines
❖ More seamless experience for those with disabilities
❖ Improved connections to transit, job centers and commercial districts
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Connections to Transit

- Arlington
- Alewife
- Davis Sq
- Porter Sq
- Cambridge

Belmont
Connections to Transit

TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Arlington

Somerville

Belmont

Cambridge

Rail with Trail

Minuteman Bikeway

Davis Sq

Porter Sq

Community Path
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Connections to Transit

Alewife Station:
- 500-600 bikes per day (during nice weather)
- 10,000 boardings
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Perpendicular Connectivity

...using on-street facilities

- Sidepaths
- Shoulders/Bike lanes
- Cycle tracks
- Shared Lanes
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Perpendicular Connectivity

In urban areas...

Freight Street cycle track, Waterbury
TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Perpendicular Connectivity

FHWA “STAR” Guide
www.ruraldesignguide.org

In rural areas...

GLENWILD TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Fitchburg Cut-off Trail, Cambridge MA
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Industrial/Railroad Heritage

W, O&D Trail, Herndon VA
Public Art

Grand Junction Trail, Cambridge MA

Minuteman Path, Arlington MA
Public Art

Minuteman Path, Arlington MA
BUILDING COMMUNITY
Public Art - Murals

Watertown MA rail-trail

Duboce Bikeway mural, San Francisco (Mona Caron)
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Think Regionally
Norwalk River Valley Trail

38 miles of trail through five communities:

Danbury
Ridgefield
Redding
Wilton
Norwalk
Norwalk

- Mix of existing trails & proposed paths thru varied contexts, on-street connections & a boardwalk

Future connection around aquarium
Norwalk River Valley Trail

Norwalk

- Mix of existing trails & proposed paths thru varied contexts, on-street connections & a boardwalk

Maple Street crossing
Wilton

- “Wilton Loop” focus of initial phase of work
Norwalk River Valley Trail

Wilton Loop

- 6-mile loop, 4 mi complete
- 4,000 people/month use
- Huge volunteer effort
  - Trail clean-up/building
  - Fundraising

Source: Norwalk’s The Hour
Source: Timber & Stone web site
Source: Google
Source: Norwalk ‘s The Hour
Transforming Communities Through Trail Planning & Design

Phil Goff, Sr. Associate
November 19, 2018
philgoff@altaplanning.com
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Year-round Use